

Our Redeemer's Voice

January 2024



LET US UNWRAP AND ENJOY EPIPHANY

What happens during the Epiphany?

Lots. That is probably not the most helpful answer to the question in the title. So first of all, we are getting ready for the Epiphany. People have epiphanies all the time, which means they have revelations or 'light bulb moments' frequently. The Church has the revelation of Jesus Christ in her midst.

It has been said that in Advent God the Father wraps the present for His Church. At Christmas the present is delivered. During the Epiphany season we are able to unwrap and enjoy the present. During the Epiphany season we see Jesus Christ at work- in His baptism, performing miracles of healing and feeding and raising from the dead. Ultimately what we hear is that Jesus Christ is the only-begotten, beloved Son of God.



GOD HAS DELIVERED A FAITHFUL PASTOR



Front L-R Rev. Bill Harmon, District President, Ravened Jeremy Loesch, Rev. Michael Thress, Circuit Visitor. Second Row L-R Rev. Ray Rogers, Rev. Peter Mueller, Rev. Carl Kruelle, Rev. Steve Funck and Rev. Alemu Ermias Katiso

After 14 months of prayers God has delivered us a faithful pastor. Reverend Jeremy Loesch. During that time we were blessed to share our services with several supply pastors. We thank them and appreciate them for bringing the sacraments, and also friendship to our congregation. Thank you Pastor Funck, Pastor Rogers, Pastor Mueller, Pastor Thress, Pastor Meilander, and Pastor Robertson.

One of the epiphanies that we receive is that Jesus Christ has come for people of all nations. I realize that is not the most stunning thing you've ever read, but it is good to remember. You probably won't be

(Continued Page 2)

Unwrap, Enjoy Epiphany	Pg 1
Lutheran Hour Ministries	Pg 3
Let Our Light Shine	Pg 3
Christmas Gathering	Pg 4
History Resolutions	Pg 4
LWML Devotion	Pg 5
News & Notes	Pg 4
Lutherans Around Us	Pg 6
January Calendar	Pg 7
Through the Bible in a Year	Pg 8

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
10 Johnson Road,
Newark, DE 19713
302-737-6176
www.ourredeemernewark.org

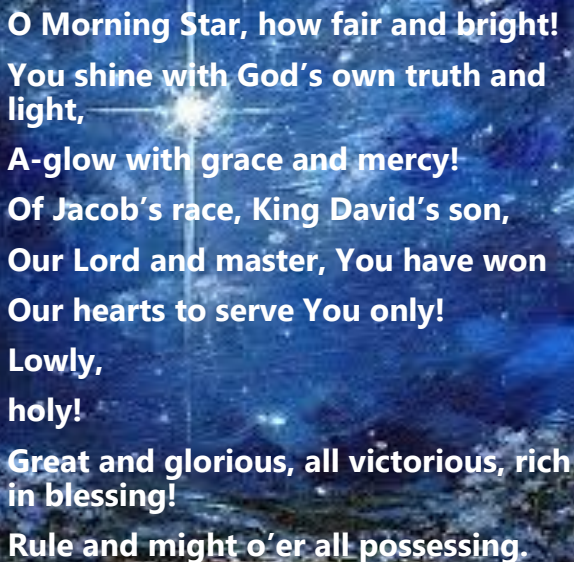
ENJOY EPHIPANY (continued from page 1) stunned to read this either: the Church of God does not enjoy a lot of unity. There is an Eastern Church and a Western Church. This division goes back to 1054 AD and is called the "Great Schism." The Church of Jesus Christ was divided into East (Constantinople) and West (Rome). And the division remains. The two Churches have their own calendars. In the West, Christmas is celebrated on Dec. 25th. In the East Christmas is observed on Jan. 6th. This is when the wise men reached Bethlehem, offering Jesus their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Rather than focusing on the different dates, look for Jesus. He's there in the manger. And on one side there is Joseph and Mary, maybe a shepherd or two, perhaps the 'innkeeper' is there checking on things. On the other side is Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar (the traditional names of the wise men) and maybe a few attendants with them. Faithful Jews who have been waiting for the Lord God Almighty to fulfill the promise of a savior. Gentiles who have had some access to the Word of God and are moved by the Spirit to seek out this Lord. The Epiphany for God's Church is that people are brought together around the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Visit that led to visits...

The initial event in the Epiphany is the visit of the wise men to the manger in Bethlehem. From that event has come the custom of visitation in the Christian church. The Epiphany season is a good time for the church to replicate that. We're not going to Bethlehem, but we are going to visit together for the sake of getting to know one another. Many of you I know and some of you I don't. But to keep Pres. Bill Harmon's sermon in mind, I am viewing this as Our Redeemer Pastorate 2.0 I was away from you for nine years. There has been a lot of water under the bridge for both of us. Visiting together will give us a chance to learn about each other.

Back to Epiphany...



O Morning Star, how fair and bright!
You shine with God's own truth and light,
A-glow with grace and mercy!
Of Jacob's race, King David's son,
Our Lord and master, You have won
Our hearts to serve You only!
Lowly,
holy!
Great and glorious, all victorious, rich
in blessing!
Rule and might o'er all possessing.

You will find sign up sheets in the entryway where you can indicate the times that you'd like to meet with me. I envision 45 min. to 1 hour conversations in my office. I have morning time slots and evening time slots. These will be times where we can talk together. These will begin in January. Check your calendars, your appointments, and we'll enjoy a visit together.

Service Move...

One thing that will happen during the Epiphany season that is more particular to our congregation is that we will move to Divine Service 2 in our Sunday worship. During the seasons of Advent and

Christmas Divine Service 1 was our form for worship. We are going to use the different settings of the Divine Service seasonally. The aim is consistency and variety. I know that sounds contradictory, but for a time we'll consistently use one setting, giving us time to get to know the service and appreciate how it brings Jesus to us and keeps us focused on Him and His gifts. The variety comes in as we recognize that the Church is not static. It's not always Christmas. The Pentecost season may be long but it doesn't last forever. Lent eventually gives way to Easter.

About Divine Service 2...you won't find too many things that are drastically different. The main difference is that you'll find a shorter setting of This Is The Feast. There are different arrangements of the Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy), the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), and the post-communion songs.

— Pastor₂

EPIPHANY IS SERENDIPITY



As Presented on "The Lutheran Hour by the Reverend Kenneth R. Klaus, 2004

Nothing in this world, no other sight can compare with the love of God, which has come to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. We have God's Epiphany, which is serendipity. Epiphany is serendipity? Those are two words, one old and one new, that you may not have heard before. Let's take a look at them. Let's talk about

the new one, serendipity, first. Have you ever started looking for one thing and wound up finding another, better thing? That's serendipity.

Epiphany is a celebration to remember the baby born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago. Epiphany recalls how some time after Jesus was born, wise men, magi following a new heaven-sent star, showed up in Jerusalem to pay their respects to the next leader of the Jewish nation. The wise men had gone looking for one thing—an earthly king—and were led by God and a star to someone far better—a heaven-sent Savior.

Epiphany is the celebration of serendipity. We look for one thing; God supplies another. He does it all the time. The childless priest Zacharias set out to burn incense and, serendipity, ended up with a promise that his son would be the forerunner of the Savior. A Samaritan woman went to a well to draw water and, serendipity, found the Savior who gave her forgiveness and a new path to walk. Mary Magdalene sat before an open tomb and started a search to find her Teacher's dead body. The most wondrous serendipity of all, she saw her living, death-defeating Savior.

Christ is risen indeed! Thank you, God, for our Savior Jesus Christ! Amen.

LET OUR LIGHT SHINE — VOLUNTEER!

BUILD A BAG — It takes about 4 hours to complete a sleeping bag from layering the material to rolling and tying the bag up. We often talk about who will use our sleeping bags, and where they travel. In November Ruth brought a children's Disney sleeping bag from Orphan Grain Train that had a broken zipper and could not be used by them. She spent a couple hours cutting the teeth off the zipper and stitching up the sides of the bag while wondering if Newark Empowerment Center would even accept a child's sleeping bag.

CONSIDERATION FOR DONORS: ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

All items **MUST** be clean in good repair and gently used. We seek men's women's, children's and infant's clothing and shoes in all sizes for all seasons as well as:

- Purses, Handbags, Reusable shopping totes
- Accessories — scarves gloves, belts
- New (packaged) underwear
- Bicycles
- Domestic Goods
- Curtains, drapes, tablecloths
- Sheets, blankets (no used pillows) and towels
- Sewing fabric and supplies
- Children's items
- Soft and hard toys in good condition
- School supplies, no books
- Personal care items
- Hygiene Kits/see projects under "What We Do" at www.ogt.org
- Diapers (packaged) Adult incontinence & infant
- Medical Items— canes, crutches, commodes, shower chairs, orthopedic supplies (i.e. boots, shoes), and wheel chairs
- Bibles, Hymnals

On December 6, I took an adult sleeping bag and the child size bag to the center, our last delivery before Christmas. The attendant at the desk had a moment, so I asked if they could use a child size sleeping bag. She answered without hesitation, "Yes! Definitely! There is a woman who has a little girl, and they are currently sleeping in their car." We know who received those two sleeping bags and that they will be keeping a mother and child warm in their car somewhere in Newark. Please keep them in your prayers as winter weather gets colder this month.

We will resume our mission project on January 2 at 10 a.m. When cabin fever sets in, come, and join us for a couple hours of fellowship and service.

"Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12— Marybeth

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN — Please consider donating time or efforts to help this important charity in 2024. Please see list to the left of items that can be donated or recycled to make a difference in the life of someone who may be at risk in the world.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT: Heavily worn damaged or stained clothing; Used underwear—bras, underwear, used swim garments Glass, ceramic, electric or battery powered items or items with demeaning language or skull and crossbones.

COMMUNITY PARTY WITH NEIGHBORHOOD — On December 9, Our Redeemer and Chestnut Hill Estate Civic Association held a joint Christmas Party on December 9 from 1 to 4 p.m. There were games, crafts, gingerbread man decorating and door prizes for all ages. It was wonderful opportunity to meet our neighbors and share Jesus' love with our community. Santa (look closely, he might look familiar) showed up to offer an early Merry Christmas to all. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event very special.



SOMETHING ABOUT RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR — We have all done this a time or two in our lives. It is not a new phenomena. It is said that the Babylonians celebrated the New Year at the vernal Equinox which was the beginning of the farming season with promises to pay debt and return borrowed items in 2000 years B.C.

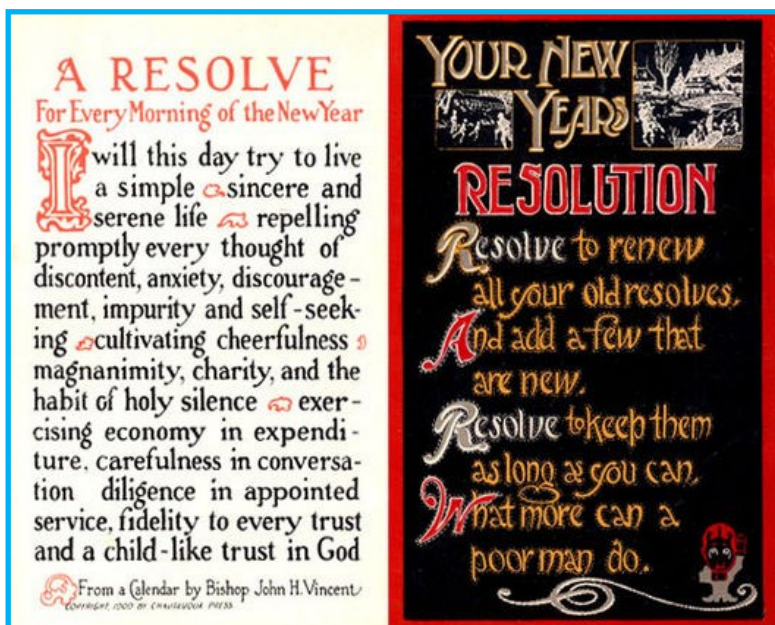
This tradition was adopted by ancient Romans as an act of resolutions with the timeline shifting to the Julian calendar in 46. BC that declared January 1st as the start of the new year. They made promises to the god Janus.

During medieval times nights took a "peacock vow" to continue their commitment to chivalry.

For early Christians, the first day of the new year became an occasion for thinking about one's past mistakes and resolving to do better in the coming year.

Today, new year resolutions are mostly a secular act. Most make resolutions for self improvement. Gallop polls reflect that almost 45 percent of Americans make resolutions at the new year, with only 8 percent reaching their goals.

*This information came from The History Channel
By: Sarah Pruitt, contributor.*



LIVING IN THE SPIRIT A LWML DEVOTION SUBMITTED BY MARYBETH



Living in the Spirit ... Gives Me Joy *"But the fruit of the Spirit is ... joy" (Galatians 5:22).*

Vacations. Vacation homes. Jobs. Better jobs. TVs. Bigger TVs. Parties. More parties. Shopping, shopping, shopping. Boats. Cars, etc., etc. The list of things we think will bring us joy is endless. But the time, energy, and money spent on the pursuit of happiness are wasted because the material things we want today are not a source of everlasting joy. They will not bring comfort when troubles or sorrows enter our lives.

True joy comes to us as the Holy Spirit leads us into living with Jesus Christ. Through Him we have the precious gift of eternal life. Knowing this helps us to walk through the dark times into the Light of Christ's love. The things of life are only temporary but God's promises will last forever. Joy is God caring for us. *The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy (Psalm 126:3 NIV).*

Let us shout with loud voices, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" Jesus has come to give us this message: *"For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:40).*

Prayer: Lord, what comfort we have knowing the pursuit of spiritual things will never be time wasted. Thank You for the joy You have put in our lives through Your Spirit and Your Son. In His name. Amen.

Living in the Spirit ... Gives Me Joy Mustard Seed: Living in the Spirit, 22/30 Written by 2005-2007 Mustard Seeds Task Force Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League, ©2007 Adapted by CREC, 2017

OUR REDEEMER NEWS & NOTES

BRIEF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING—Immediately after service on January 21st to discuss possible by-law changes.

MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP/SOCIAL HOUR—Social & fellowship hour is held on the 3rd Sunday each month. We ask that 2 to 3 people bring items such as simple snacks, desserts, finger foods, etc. Next fellowship is January 21.—*Lina*

ALTAR GUILD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED—Start the new year by becoming part of the Altar Guild Team. We need your help. No experience necessary. Please contact Lina.

BIBLE STUDY—Every Sunday at 8:45 a.m. Please note the earlier time. You can also participate online.

DEADLINE—For information to be included in Sunday's bulletin is Tue. morning each week; newsletter deadline is 20th of each month.

OFFICE HOURS—Normal hours are M—Th from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

BUILD A BAG—Join us on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. All are welcome to help make sleeping bags for the homeless. No sewing experience required. See box in Narthex for other items needed.—*MaryBeth*

AIR CONDITIONING/HEATING PROTOCOLS—Please shut all doors to rooms not being used to help with cooling efficiency during the summer and winter months.—*Bob*

ORCHARD—It might be winter, but one gardener has not given up. He continues to harvest greens from his plot in late December. Vince Brown has been an active community garden member. He helps with the paths and turns the compost during the summer months.





LUTHERANS AROUND US

Annual Report for Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Delaware

It's a joy and privilege to work with the amazing, gifted, and inspiring students of LCM! Amid challenging times in the wider world, our students give me hope as they serve generously, prioritize their faith, and engage respectfully with tough questions. Tuesday evening gatherings remain the core of our program, with wonderful, home-cooked dinners and desserts provided by local parishioners, alumni, and board members, as well as meaningful worship times. Worship activities and topics during the year have included the popular Human Continuum exercise; sharing faith items; Lenten and Holy Week worship; discussions about Scripture, prayer, worry, blessing, and faith; candle-lighting for All Saints' Day; and Advent worship. In addition, we've been journeying through the Gospel of Luke together.

In the area of service, students have continued to volunteer with FISH, *Fellowship in Serving the Hungry*. FISH is a wonderful cooperative outreach to Newark area families facing food insecurity, together with committed volunteers from St. Paul's Lutheran Church. LCM has enjoyed many social activities over the past year: *UDairy* ice cream runs, Easter dinner, a spring retreat to Bethany Beach (which included a service project), informal monthly get-togethers for coffee and conversation, a fall retreat to Ocean City, Maryland (along with other synod campus ministries), a fall bonfire at a senior's home, a "Friendsgiving" meal, an Advent brunch, and a joyous Advent Party (pictured below.)



Thank you for your continued support for LCM at UD!

LCM held two fundraisers this year, an online version in early February and our first in-person event in four years in November, the latter graciously hosted by Hope Lutheran Church. Student leaders and board members offered beautiful testimonials, Bishop Bill Gohl kept us laughing, we raised welcome support for LCM, and a good time was enjoyed by all! We're so grateful for the generous support of our synod, local congregations, and individuals: alumni, local parishioners, parents, and other friends of this ministry. Thank you for sharing the vision of LCM!

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The LCM students love to bless other organizations, as they vote how to steward annual interest from our ministry's endowment fund. This year's gift recipients included Bear Creek Lutheran Camp and Lutheran Disaster Response.

Together with our Directing Committee, staff, and students, I thank you from the heart for your continued partnership and prayers for LCM! We love interacting and sharing with those who join us for Tuesday dinners. We're grateful to others who regularly keep our students and leaders in their prayers. Your support and donations allow us to continue to shape welcoming and harmonious spaces in which students grow in leadership, service, and faith in Jesus. We could not do this without you! May God richly bless you, your community, and the ministries of which you are a part.

Mindy Holland, Chaplain and Minister of Word and Service
302-368-3078; chaplain@lcmde.org



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SERVING — Pastor Jeremy Loesch ORGANIST — J. Hockersmith USHERS Arlen Besel Dennis Boon Jim Rose	1	2	3	4	2	6
7 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Communion DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School	8	9 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	10	11	12	13
14 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Worship DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School	15 Office Closed Federal Holiday	16 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	17	18	19	20 Newsletter Deadline
21 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Communion DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School Fellowship after service Congregational Meeting 11 a.m.	22	23 Announcement Deadline. Build A Bag 10 a.m.	24	25	26	27
28 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Worship DS2 10 a.m. Sunday School	29	30 Announcement Deadline Build A Bag 10 a.m.	31	28 STREAMING 1/7 1/14 1/21 1/28	29 LECTORS 1/7 B Cooley 1/14 A Besel 1/21 K Gerzevske 1/28 R Billy	30

JANUARY BIBLE READINGS

- 1** Luke 1:68-79
Mark 2
- 2** Psalm 30
Mark 3
- 3** Psalm 31
Mark 4
- 4** Psalm 32
Mark 5
- 5** Psalm 33
Mark 6
- 6** Psalm 34
Mark 7
- 7** Psalm 35
Mark 8
- 8** Psalm 36
Mark 9
- 9** Psalm 37
Mark 10
- 10** Psalm 38
Mark 11
- 11** Psalm 39
Mark 12
- 12** Psalm 40
Mark 13
- 13** Psalm 41
Mark 14
- 14** Psalm 42
Mark 15-16
- 15** Psalm 43
Genesis 1-3
- 16** Psalm 44



***Read a little
each day and
you will get
through the
entire Bible in
one year***

- 17** Psalm 45
Genesis 4-6
- 18** Psalm 46
Genesis 7-9
- 19** Psalm 47
Genesis 10-12
- 20** Psalm 48
Genesis 13-15
- 21** Psalm 49
Genesis 16-18
- 22** Psalm 50
Genesis 19-21
- 23** Psalm 51
Genesis 22-24
- 24** Psalm 52
Genesis 25-27
- 25** Psalm 53
Genesis 28-30
- 26** Psalm 54
Genesis 31-33
- 27** Psalm 55
Genesis 34-36
- 28** Psalm 56
Genesis 37-39
- 29** Psalm 57
Genesis 40-42
- 30** Psalm 58
Genesis 43-45
- 31** Psalm 59
Genesis 46-48
- 32** Luke 1:68-79
Genesis 49-50